



# HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE

## Democratic Caucus

The Honorable John M. Spratt Jr. ■ Ranking Democratic Member

B-71 Cannon HOB ■ Washington, DC 20515 ■ 202-226-7200 ■ [www.house.gov/budget\\_democrats](http://www.house.gov/budget_democrats)

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### Top Reasons to Support Democratic Budget

**1. Returns the Budget to Balance** — The Democratic budget reaches balance in 2012. The Democratic budget also has smaller deficits than the Republican budget, and accumulates less debt. By contrast, the Republican budget never returns to balance, and even refuses to show how big its deficits will be after 2011.

**2. Includes Fiscally Responsible Budget Enforcement Rules** — The Democratic budget backs the two-sided Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGO) budget enforcement rules that require that the cost of any new mandatory spending or revenue legislation be fully offset. During the 1990s, two-sided PAYGO rules played a critical role in turning record deficits to record surpluses. The Democratic budget also requires a separate vote to increase the debt limit, and prohibits using fast-track reconciliation procedures to make the deficit worse.

**3. Invests in Education** — The Democratic budget provides \$4.6 billion more than the Republican budget for education appropriations, and over five years provides \$45.3 billion more than the Republican resolution. The Democratic budget rejects the deep cuts proposed by the Republican budget, including the elimination of 42 education programs such as vocational education, Perkins loans, Safe and Drug-Free Schools state grants, and the GEAR-UP college readiness program. The Democratic budget also makes a down payment on college affordability by cutting student loan interest rates.

**4. Keeps Our Commitment to Our Veterans** — The Democratic budget includes \$8.6 billion more than the Republican budget over five years for veterans' health care. The Democratic budget also rejects the increase on health care fees on military retirees who are enrolled in Tricare. The Republican budget asks additional sacrifices from those have already served and sacrificed for our country; the Democratic budget rejects the misguided Republican policies and keeps our commitment to our veterans.

**5. Provides More for Health Care** — The Democratic budget provides \$23 billion more over five years to fund health priorities cut by the Republican budget, including medical research at NIH and the CDC, rural health activities, and graduate medical education for children's hospitals. The Democratic budget also takes steps to address the problems with the implementation of the Medicare prescription drug benefit, including extending the May 15 sign-up period through the end of year and protecting seniors from any enrollment penalties. The Democratic budget also takes steps to help the uninsured, and creates a reserve fund to increase Medicare payments to physicians, which are currently scheduled to be cut.

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**6. *Protects the Environment*** — The Democratic budget provides \$2.9 billion more than the Republican budget for 2007 for appropriated environmental protection and conservation programs, and \$25.0 billion more over five years. The Democratic budget rejects Republican cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency (including the Clean Water State Revolving Fund), the Army Corps of Engineers, and the National Park Service.

**7. *Rejects Cuts to Mandatory Spending*** — The Democratic budget rejects the \$6.8 billion in fast-track reconciliation cuts to mandatory programs included in the Republican resolution, including a \$4.0 billion cut assigned to the Ways and Means Committee. Under reconciliation, authorizing committees can meet their assigned targets by cutting any program within their jurisdiction. The programs under the jurisdiction of the Ways and Means Committee that could be cut include Medicare, Unemployment Insurance, and the Earned Income Tax Credit.